

David C. Keim, D.D.S.  
Family and Cosmetic Dentistry

September 10th, 2017

Dear Senator Olszewski,

**RE: Medicaid Reduction Proposal**

I am writing to you in regard to the possible Medicaid reduction proposal. Since we have had the opportunity to care for each other as patients, you are well aware of my service on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation and that I have brought that public health perspective to my private practice in Kalispell by providing care to Medicaid patients throughout the Flathead Valley. I see Medicaid eligible patients in my practice (at a loss) as a personal civil service duty to our citizens that live in the valley.

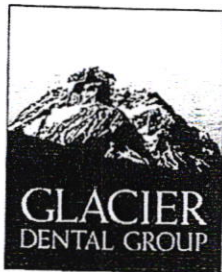
Please inform the Governor and those involved that this type of reduction in reimbursement reduces the number of patients that I can see to offset the financial liabilities that come with dentistry. Dental Medicaid rates have historically been only half of the normal charge for most practices. Most dental offices operate on an overhead of about 65 to 75 percent, so Medicaid doesn't even cover the cost of care and provides no personal reimbursement to the dentist. Simply stated, dentists are giving away treatment and are personally subsidizing care for Medicaid patients. Despite this, as past President of both our local First District Dental Association and the Montana Dental Association I am proud to inform you more than two-thirds of Montana dentists accept Medicaid patients, one of the highest participation rates nationally. Decreasing reimbursement makes our commitment to Medicaid harder to justify financially.

Therefore, if you would please pass this message on. It is important not tie the hands of the providers working to deliver care to the most vulnerable patients in our valley and throughout Montana. If the reimbursement rate is reduced, so will the number of patients served.

Thank You for your voice defending the integrity of not only Medicine and Dentistry but all health care throughout our state.

Sincerely,

David C Keim DDS  
Glacier Dental Group, PC



David C. Keim, D.D.S.  
Family and Cosmetic Dentistry

September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Dear Senator Olszewski,

I am writing in regards to the proposed Medicaid reimbursement rate reduction, as I have deep concerns that cuts in Medicaid funding will adversely impact Montana's most vulnerable, as well as drive up cost-of-care for the average non-Medicaid insured patient.

Reducing Medicaid rates will dramatically harm access to care, and ultimately health, for the developmentally disabled, children, frail elderly, and veterans. In fact, many studies have demonstrated a significant correlation between Medicaid reimbursement rates and dental care utilization among the publically insured as well as dentist participation in Medicaid.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> It's my wholehearted belief that caring for the helpless in our society is a social, professional, and ethical responsibility. As past President of our local dental society and the Montana Dental Association, I am proud to inform you that there are a high number of Montana dentists who are Medicaid providers. However, accepting reimbursement rates which do not cover overhead expenses, is not a financially responsible business model. As such, providers will significantly limit, or cease to serve, Medicaid patients in order to maintain sustainable. I'm sure this isn't the intent of the proposers of this plan, but that will be the very real impact. For the sake of those who are helpless to help themselves, I implore state government to consider other alternatives.

In addition to hurting Montana's most vulnerable, reducing Medicaid rates will drive up cost-of-care for the average non-Medicaid insured Montanan. The fact is, when Medicaid reimbursement rates are too low to cover overhead expenses, providers and healthcare organizations cost-shift the uncovered expenses to the rest of the population. Thus cutting Medicaid rates has the paradoxical impact of increasing the healthcare expenses of all.

Senator Olszewski, thank you for your voice defending the integrity of not only medicine and dentistry, but all healthcare though out our state.

Sincerely,

Dr. David C Keim, DDS  
Glacier Dental Group, PC

<sup>1</sup> Decker SL. Medicaid payment levels to dentists and access to dental care among children and adolescents. JAMA. 2011;306(2):187-193.

<sup>2</sup> Buchmueller TC, Orzol S, Shore-Sheppard LD. The effect of Medicaid payment rates on access to dental care among children. NBER Working Paper No. 19218. July 2013. Available from: [http://www.nber.org/papers/w19218.pdf?new\\_window=1](http://www.nber.org/papers/w19218.pdf?new_window=1). Accessed September 7th, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Nasseh K, Vujicic M. The impact of Medicaid reform on children's dental care utilization in Connecticut, Maryland, and Texas. Health Ser Res. 2014;50(4):1236-1249.

<sup>4</sup> Beazoglou T, Douglass J, Bailit H, Myne-Joslin V. Impact of increased dental reimbursement rates on Husky Ainsured children: 2006-2011. Connecticut Health Foundation. February 2013. Available from: <http://www.cthealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/impact-of-increased-dental-reimbursement-rates.pdf>. Accessed September 7th, 2017.



**O'Connell, Sue**

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**From:** Ann Treece <annt@step-inc.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 06, 2017 8:03 AM  
**To:** O'Connell, Sue  
**Subject:** Medicaid waiver rate reductions

Dear Ms. O'Connell:

We would like to request that the Children, Families, Health & Human Services Interim Committee continue their objection to the proposed rule change submitted by Department of Public Health and Human Services that would reduce Medicaid waiver rates paid to community-based service providers. These services are essential to the well-being of many people with disabilities across Montana. These services enable people to participate in the life of their communities, hold jobs and pay taxes, and maintain strong informal support networks. The actual costs of providing these services already exceed the existing Medicaid rates; reducing the rates further will likely drive some providers out of the market and thus limit choice and the quality available to the people who rely on these services. Please continue your objection to the rate reductions and encourage DPHHS to find other cost savings that do not impact the delivery of essential services.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

*Ann Treece*

Executive Director

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